
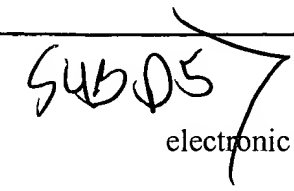



purchase, the order acceptance request comprising a discrete message that includes a plurality of modular elements individually protected by cryptographic security codes;

 the server computer being programmed to process the order acceptance request based on pre-programmed criteria, including authentication of the cryptographic security codes and examination of the modular elements of the discrete message individually protected by the cryptographic security codes, and, based on the processing of the order acceptance request, to transmit to the client computer an order acceptance response based on the pre-programmed criteria, the order acceptance response comprising a discrete message transmitted during a negotiation phase of a transaction that includes a plurality of modular elements individually protected by cryptographic security codes.

 37. (Amended) A method of processing order acceptance requests in an electronic commerce system, comprising a client computer and a server computer interconnected by a public packet switched communications network, the method comprising;

 receiving at the server computer an order acceptance request transmitted by the client computer comprising a plurality of terms or conditions of a proposed offer for a purchase, the order acceptance request comprising a discrete message that includes a plurality of modular elements individually protected by cryptographic security codes;

processing the order acceptance request based on pre-programmed criteria, including authentication of the cryptographic security codes and examination of the modular elements of the discrete message individually protected by the cryptographic security codes; and

based on the processing of the order acceptance request, transmitting to the client computer an order acceptance response based on the pre-programmed criteria, the order acceptance response comprising a discrete message transmitted during a negotiation phase of a